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ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of the SNDT (formerly Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey) University in reducing poverty in the Gilbert Hill-Gamdevi Dongri area of Mumbai, India. The Gilbert Hill area accommodates around 1 million people, most of whom are migrants form other parts of India. The Department of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Home Sciences of SNDT Women's University implemented a project focusing on adult education, preschool education, improving enrollment in elementary education, and income-generating activities. Program evaluation activities show that over the years the association of the University with the project has helped improve the lot of the poor in many ways. The project has opened opportunities for women to take on income-generating activities, increased access to education, and has helped widows apply for government funding for various types of activities. (SLD)

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Strategies of education and training for disadvantaged groups

Attacking urban poverty: the role of the SNDT Women's University, Mumbai, India

The 'Gilbert Hill Programme'

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Strategies of education and training
for disadvantaged groups

Attacking urban poverty: the role of the SNDT Women's University, Mumbai, India –

The 'Gilbert Hill Programme'

S.A. Udipi, M.A. Varghese, M. Kamath

International Institute for Educational Planning

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

'Anganwadi'	See explanation for ICDS
Balwadi	A pre-school early childhood education facility/ centre
BMC	Bombay Municipal Corporation
CDS	Community Development Society
CO	Community Organizer
CW	Community Workers
ECE	Early Childhood Education
FP	Family Planning
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services - A scheme by the Government of India to improve health and nutritional status of 0-6-year-old children, pregnant and lactating women. Also provides pre-school education. The place where early childhood education is conducted, along with other activities, is called the *Anganwadi* and the worker at the grass-roots level who delivers the services is called the *Anganwadi* worker or *Anganwadi teacher/sevika.*
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
Maderasa	Centre for religious instruction, teaching of the Koran and Arabic
MMC	Mumbai Municipal Corporation (Note MMC was previously BMC but the name changed when Bombay was renamed as Mumbai)
Mohalla	A pocket within the slum

NFE	Non-formal Education
NHC	Neighbourhood Committee
NRY	Nehru Rozgar Yojana – Scheme by Government of India which finances vocational/skill training and facilitates loans from banks for income generation
'Pav'	Local term used for bread
PDS	Public Distribution System
PT	Parent/Teacher
Purdah	Veil - women have to cover their body and the face should be veiled
RCV	Resident Community Volunteer
SNDT University	Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey University
SSC	Secondary School Certificate – denotes completion of school education
UBSP	Urban Basic Services for the Poor

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The project team owes a lot to all the officials of the Mumbai Municipal Corporation, including Mr K.G. Pai, Ex-Chief Engineer; the Additional Municipal Commissioners Mr Baroi, Mr Ratnakar Gaikwad; the Ward Officers Mr Ghaste, Mr Hirekar and Mr Khaire; the Education Department of the Corporation, the District Adult Education Office, the Department of Adult and Continuing Education and Research in Home Science and all members of the Department of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Home Science, SNDT Women's University, especially Mr R. Ashar, Mr R. Kamath and Mr R. Parekh.

PRESENTATION OF THE SERIES

The theme of the education and training of disadvantaged groups is high on the agenda in many countries, because it is related to a much wider phenomenon: growing deprivation and social exclusion. This situation is not only disturbing, it is also a paradox in that the increase of poverty and exclusion often goes hand in hand with economic growth. This worrying observation implies that an increase in wealth is not a sufficient remedy, but must be accompanied by job creation and the redistribution of revenues.

It is evident that a scarcity of jobs or employment opportunities are often at the heart of the problem of deprivation and social exclusion. However, non-access to educational and training programmes is also a critical factor. In fact, low levels of schooling, or even the total absence of schooling, often contribute to a precarious integration into the job market.

The role of education is not just limited to giving young people access to jobs and a decent living wage. The admission of disadvantaged groups to educational and training programmes is part of the wider concern of promoting the educational process throughout one's life, the indispensable condition not only for a durable integration into the job market, but also for a full and active citizenship. Moreover, in most cases, educational investment produces long-term effects, allowing one to eradicate the transmission of poverty from one generation to the next.

Educational and training programmes are still poorly adapted to the needs of disadvantaged groups, a fact which is confirmed by the high percentage of children leaving school at an early age. To respond to these needs, the public sector has had recourse to various mechanisms. Moreover, private initiatives are proliferating outside

of formal education channels thanks to the involvement of NGOs, often drawing on outside aid. Despite the undeniable contribution that they have made to disadvantaged groups, their overall achievements do not constitute a satisfactory response, given the seriousness of the problem. No solution will really be found as long as the education system continues to produce social outcasts. That is why it is important to draw the appropriate conclusions from these evaluations, taken from both the public and private sectors, and to set up a funding process needed for a more global approach to the problem.

The research project on 'Alternative educational and training strategies for disadvantaged groups', which the Institute is continuing to develop and elaborate, has in fact as its main objective the gathering and sharing of information on educational and training projects and programmes aimed at the disadvantaged. The second objective consists of studying their content in detail. The third is to examine the existing machinery between public administrations and other key players, and to analyze the tools and methods used to evaluate these projects and programmes. The final aim is to encourage political and technical dialogue, and to bolster national capacities to create and implement programmes aimed at the disadvantaged.

The notion of disadvantaged groups is difficult to grasp in any concrete sense. It can be defined in several ways, according to various criteria (social, economic, etc.). It is also a relative concept, including different realities according to context. That is why the current project does not exhaust all aspects of this concept. It confines itself to studying unqualified young people who have not had access to schools or who have been prematurely excluded.

The project is especially interested in the role of the various players in the public sector. This preoccupation revolves around a double-pronged series of questions:

- How to open up and adapt educational and training systems so as to give access to the disadvantaged? Is this possible? What are the appropriate strategies? Under what conditions are they to be applied?
- How to delegate teaching and training responsibilities for disadvantaged groups to other players: NGOs, local initiatives, community associations, the business sector, etc.? How to promote, guide, control, co-ordinate, finance and evaluate their actions?

These two options are complementary. In fact, it can be assumed that the experience gained in initiatives launched on behalf of disadvantaged groups will have wider repercussions of benefit to overall educational policies.

This study illustrates how universities can help to improve the destiny of the urban poor living in slums in Mumbai, India. The Department of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Home Sciences, of the SNDT Women's University, adopted in 1989 one of the slums, namely, the Gilbert Hill-Gamdevi Dongri slum, to implement a developmental project supported by UNICEF and IDRC. The university continued its efforts in the nineties, with funding support from the local urban bodies. This document reflects the significant role played by the university in creating community-based structures, in building local capacity to address and seek solutions to the problems by the local communities themselves, in negotiating with authorities for the provision of basic services in the slums, and in playing an advocacy role to promote the cause of the poor, with the aim of influencing the decision-makers.

The Institute is grateful to Bikas Sanyal for directing the study and to N.V. Varghese for editing the booklet.

SUMMARY

Urbanization in India is characterized by a high rate of population growth in the urban centres and inability of civic bodies to provide basic services, including education and health. Nearly 30% of the population in all the major cities in India live in slums Nearly 55% of the Mumbai city's population live in slums. It is imperative, therefore, to plan for improving the quality of life in slums, to provide better opportunities to the people living in slums to enhance their productivity and purchasing power.

Traditionally policy and administrative response to urban slums used to be one of 'slum clearance'. This approach has gradually changed to 'slum improvement' and more recently to 'slum development'. The Department of Post-graduate Studies and Research in Home Sciences of the SNDT Women's University conducted a national workshop in 1989 which culminated in a multi-centric project aimed at improving health and nutritional status of urban slum dwellers. This case study of Gilbert Hill – Gamdevi Dongri slum reflects the efforts by the university in the past six years to reduce poverty and improving the destiny of the poor.

The Gilbert Hill-Gamdevi Dongri, which occupies approximately 150-200 acres of land in the western suburbs of the city, was declared a slum by the Mumbai Municipal Corporation in 1974. The slum now accommodates around 1,00,000 people mostly migrants from 14 states of India. The socio-economic profile of the slum in 1991 showed that the slum dwellers are predominantly Muslim and they belong to low income groups and nearly 30% of the families live below the official poverty line. The families were of large size, the community members

were illiterate and were politically polarized. The basic amenities provided in the slum were also quite inadequate – for example one water tap was to be shared by 673 persons, 43.2% of families did not have access to toilets.

The project focussing on adult education, pre-school education, improving enrolment in primary classes and on income generating activities was started and the Department of Post Graduate Studies and Research in Home Sciences, SNDT university was requsted to play a leading role in implementation of the project through the capacity building of community members to plan and implement programmes concerning them. The community workers (CWs) were the prime target for capacity building since they were directly involved with implementing the programme.

The association of the university with the project has helped the destiny of the poor in many ways The Community Worker's affiliation with the university have enhanced their credibility and effectiveness. The Community Workers today on their own, motivate parents to come to literacy classes, motivate to send their children to school help them when they have difficulties in obtaining admission to school. Consequently the demand for and hence the number of literacy classes increased from 4 in 1991 to 20 in 1997; similarly the number of pre-school centres increased from 3 to 10 during the same period. Nearly 240 women have been directly given opportunities for income-generation. Several products are produced and marketed by SNDT. Further, association with the university has helped the widows to apply for pensions and loans for income generation under schemes implemented by the government.

The university also has benefited very much from its association with such a project.

The programme therefore has served to enrich the teaching-learning content of the academic programme; expanded the horizons of the University and scope of its activities. It has also provided a platform/forum for the University's research activities to be presented for consideration by Govt., national and international agencies. It has also led to formulation of specific and specialized training programmes offered by the Dept. such as courses in Research Methodology and Data Analysis, Urban Community Health Management, AIDS Counseling, Training of Early Childhood Educators.

The project experience provided fertile ground for conducting micro-studies by post graduate students for their Master's Dissertation. It also helped the faculty with field work experience and provided a base for developing integrated approach towards education, health and nutrition programmes. At the undergraduate level, students of B.A. can opt for a course on community development. The project helps them in obtaining fields placement. At the Departmental level, it has helped in developing and strengthening the expertise and work in issues related to urban development. On the whole, these projects have convinced the policy makers and Government Officials that the institutions of higher education can play as important role in developing the conditions of the poor.

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INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is very often characterized by a high rate of population growth in urban centres, on the one hand, and, on the other, the inability of civic bodies and governments to provide adequate essential services, including education and health. This is partly due to the unplanned expansion of urban centres. The rapid proliferation of slums in all urbanized areas, especially major metropolises in India, has brought haphazard urbanization into sharp focus. On average, almost 30 per cent of the population in all the major cities in India live in slums. In Maharashtra, nearly 37.8 per cent of the population live in urban areas. Nearly 55 per cent of the Mumbai city's population live in slums. It was projected that by the year 2000 the population living in the slums would be even larger. It is imperative, therefore, to plan for improving the quality of life in slums and to provide better opportunities to the people living in slums to enhance their productivity and purchasing power.

Traditionally, policy and administrative response to urban slums used to be one of 'slum clearance'. This approach has gradually changed to 'slum improvement' and, more recently, to 'slum development'. The Department of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Home Sciences of the SNDT Women's University conducted a national workshop in 1989 to discuss the situation and quality of life of urban slums. This workshop was supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. The deliberations and recommendations of the workshop culminated in a multi-centric project aimed at improving the health and nutritional status of urban slum-dwellers. Subsequently, the department adopted one of the slums – the Gilbert Hill-Gamdevi Dongri slum – in order to implement

the multi-centric project entitled 'Urban Nutrition'. This project was sponsored by the IDRC and UNICEF. The major objective of the project was to develop a replicable model for self-sustainable slum development which could be recommended to policy-makers.

The department undertook this responsibility for various reasons.

Firstly, the concerns of the project fitted into the department's academic agenda of teaching, research and extension. This department consists of five major disciplines: food science and nutrition, human development, family resource management, extension education, and textiles and clothing. Under each specialization the department offers M.Sc., M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees as well as several postgraduate diplomas in specialized areas. Within the academic programme, research and extension are strong core components.

Secondly, given the professional competency and research experience of the individual faculty members, the department was confident in its ability to provide training to several NGOs and thus engage in slum development.

Thirdly, an action-research project of this nature provided an excellent opportunity for the department and university to use their technical expertise and manpower resources to develop and make operational a holistic approach to the problems of urban poverty.

Fourthly, the project also provided an excellent training ground for the postgraduate students for fieldwork in their respective disciplines and sectors within this department as well as the other departments/ faculties of this university. It was envisaged that the interventions planned and implemented in a holistic and cost-effective manner through fieldwork, would address sectoral issues

taking into account constraints in terms of cultural biases, attitudes, access to services etc. Thus, the field-based work carried out throughout the project was looked upon as an opportunity to strengthen and enrich the teaching/academic programmes, making this project a matter of give and take between the slum-dwellers and the university faculty and students.

Fifthly, It was also envisaged that a non-partisan agency/institution such as the university could present the findings and experiences to the urban local body and government officials so that services for the urban poor as well as need-based schemes could be planned and put into operation.

And finally, it was envisaged that based on its field experience in other projects as well as the current one, the faculty of the department could revise and restructure the curricula for the undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes.

The programme therefore has served to enrich the teaching-learning components of the academic programme and has expanded the horizons of the university and scope of its activities. It has provided a platform/forum for the university's research activities to be presented for consideration by the provincial government and national and international agencies. It has also led to the formulation of specific and specialized training programmes offered by the departments, such as courses in research methodology and data analysis, urban community health management, AIDS counselling, training of early childhood educators, etc.

Towards the end of the three-year project period, the slum was selected for the scheme 'Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP)' sponsored by the Government of India (Central) and the Government of Maharashtra (State). Since the department had been working with

the slum-dwellers, it was requested to provide the social and academic inputs in co-ordination with physical inputs provided by the Mumbai Municipal Corporation (MMC, previously BMC). On the basis of its fieldwork, experience and academic expertise, the department was selected by the Government of Maharashtra to serve as the training institution for the UBSP for the whole state.

The department has now been working with the Gilbert Hill-Gamdevi Dongri slum for six years, of which the last three years have been devoted to the implementation of the UBSP. It has also been providing training to various functionaries of different hierarchical levels, from the grass-roots-level workers to implementers and other functionaries, for the past four years.

I. THE PROBLEM IDENTIFIED

The Gilbert Hill-Gamdevi Dongri was declared a slum by the Mumbai Municipal Corporation in 1974. This slum, which is located in one of the western suburbs of the city, occupies approximately 150-200 acres of land. Part of the slum is located on government land and about half of it encroaches on to private land. The slum originally started when residents began to occupy small pockets of marshland 40 to 50 years ago. The slum has gradually expanded, attracting migrant residents from at least 14 Indian states, as well as from neighbouring countries, and the population now exceeds 100,000. As an initial step, the department conducted a situation analysis using quantitative and qualitative methods like surveys, focus-group discussions, in-depth interviews, observations and secondary data collected from various official sources.

The socio-economic profile of the slum in 1991 showed that the slum-dwellers are predominantly Muslim and they account for nearly 70-80 per cent of the total population. All the slum-dwellers belong to low-income groups and nearly 30 per cent of the families had a monthly income of less than Rs.1,000, i.e. below the official poverty line. A large proportion (46 per cent) worked in unorganized sectors and nearly 25 per cent of the workers were daily wage earners. The slum had a high dependency ratio, with nearly 78 per cent of the families having only one earning member. The families were of large size, the community was closed and politically polarized. Many of the slum-dwellers were illiterate. Nearly 47 per cent of heads of household and 54 per cent of mothers were illiterate. The status of women was very low.

The basic amenities provided in the slum were quite inadequate (see *Table 1*). For example, one tap had to be shared by 673 persons; 43.2 per cent of the families did not have access to toilets and there was a severe shortage of public distribution system (PDS) outlets.

Table 1. Availability, utilization and constraints in sanitation services and access to PDS

Service	Availability	Utilization	Constraints Behavioural/structural
A. Environmental sanitation			
Drinking water	204 taps	1 tap/673 persons	Private connections close to sewage pipes due to nadequate water connections.
Toilets	446	1 toilet/134 persons 43.2 % families did not have access	Most in disrepair; of these only 40% for women, no toilets in some encroached pockets; no maintenance.
Drains	9,444 sq.m		Severe shortage, drains are open, and hence get clogged with rubbish; used by children for defecation; irregular cleaning by MMC, partly due to houses built over the drains.
Waste-disposal receptacles	15 receptacles	50 % families did not have access	Inadequate number of receptacles. Irregular disposal by MMC. Rubbish dumped around rather than inside bin. Rubbish disposed of indiscriminately in any open area, drains etc. Civic consciousness is poor.
B. Access to food			
Public Distribution System (PDS)	12 PDS outlets for 93,000	Severe shortage	Irregular supply of essentials, poor quality, malpractice by owners, lack of storage space, unco-operative users, violence, intimidatory tactics.

Source: Survey.

II. EDUCATION-POVERTY LINKAGES

Many of the slum-dwellers are illiterate and unskilled. Some of the youth are early drop-outs from school so they do not possess skills which would help them to get any regular employment. Some of them are informally trained in welding, garage work, etc., mostly in the form of on-the-job training, with no certificates from accredited institutions which could help them find employment in the organized sectors. Hence most of the slum-dwellers work in the unorganized sectors. The level of destitution among women is high and is caused by being abandoned or separated from the husband, divorce, the husband remarrying, widowhood and chronic disease such as TB, or addiction to alcohol and, occasionally, drugs. Even when the public authorities tried to do something to improve their living conditions, neither the information on these provisions, nor the information on facilities available for vocational training, loans for income generation, etc., reached them, due to the lack of literacy and education.

The slum has two primary municipal schools, where instruction is given in three regional languages, and three upper-primary schools that offer education up to grade VII. There are two secondary schools which are situated 5 kilometres away from the slum.

The project workers attempted to estimate the extent of coverage by different levels of education. For example, opportunity of access to pre-school was calculated by comparing the number of children attending pre-school with the total number of children of pre-school age. It was found that only 32 per cent of boys and 21 per cent of girls in the relevant age group attend pre-schools. This was partly

due to a lack of awareness on the part of parents regarding the role of pre-school education in a location where pre-school existed and partly due to non-availability of pre-school education services. Similarly, although the slum has 32 centres (Anganwadis) as part of the government scheme of Integrated Child Development Services, nearly two-thirds of mothers were not aware of ICDS services (see *Table 2*). All these factors indicate that there exists a considerable information gap, even about the facilities created for the welfare of the slum-dwellers.

Most of the Anganwadi workers are recruited from Gilbert Hill itself. The community knows the Anganwadis as 'bread centres', because bread (or 'pav') is distributed to children as part of the nutrition supplement programme. The parents do complain that the quality of services in these centres is poor, that the children are not learning much and, hence, they find it difficult to get admission in any school. Therefore, many parents, in spite of financial constraints, prefer sending their children to a private nursery school because they believe the quality of education in private schools is better and that their children will at least learn something in these schools. The younger parents are keen that their children should be given a good basic foundation in education so that they can have a chance in later years. Overall the parents were quite unhappy with the existing Anganwadis.

Table 2. Availability, utilization and constraints in education and health services

Service	Availability	Utilization	Constraints Behavioural/structural
A. Education			
Literacy	Little or no inputs for literacy	Nil	Lack of literacy inputs. Literacy perceived as more important for men in Hindi, the national language, or English literacy for women restricted to the reading of the Koran.
Pre-school	32 ICDS Anganwadis	Poor	Poor enrolment due to hard discipline, congested classes, poor teaching; only seen as 'pav' centres; lack of awareness about importance of ECE.
Primary	2 BMC primary schools		Poor enrolment, especially of girls; high drop-out rate due to child labour, no value for education; illiterate parents, no vocational skill training.
Secondary	3 middle-level schools close by; 5 private schools; 1 secondary BMC school far away; 1 night school		
B. Health care			
ICDS	32 Anganwadis	Poor awareness of ICDS (22 %); 49 % children malnourished; only 34.4% of children covered by ICDS	Severe shortage, drains open, so get clogged with rubbish, used by children for defecation, irregular cleaning by BMC; partly due to houses built overhead.
Hospital	1 maternity home and a municipal hospital close by	Partial 35,000 users in 1991	No medicines; private doctors preferred; apathetic staff, no medicines, long queues.
HP V 1 health post for ANC, PNC, FP & Immunization	1 health post	522 women used FP; 80-85 % immunization	Distance; religious taboos; lack of trained CHWS; poor credibility among community.

The coverage by the primary school system is larger than that by the pre-schools – a trend very common in all parts of the country. Two-thirds of the eligible children (68 per cent) were enrolled in schools run by the Municipal Corporation. Although a larger proportion of girls attend municipal schools, a larger percentage of boys attend private fee-paying schools. It is a clear case of gender discrimination followed by the households.

The drop-out rate of children is quite high. Nearly 40 per cent of the children dropped out at primary level for various reasons (*Tables 3* and *4*). The pattern of drop-outs indicates that the numbers are high in grades I, V and VII. While a high drop-out rate in grade I is common, rates of drop-out at the upper-primary level (grades V to VIII) are not so common. Perhaps this is the time that they are eligible to take up minor jobs in the informal sector.

Reasons for drop-out are given in *Table 4*. It shows that the single most important reason for drop-out is because the child is not interested in studying. While traditional belief was an important constraining factor for girls to be sent to schools, boys were constrained more because of the financial situation of the families. Also, the girls are kept at home to share the household chores. It is interesting to note that drop-out due to peer-group influence is not at all a phenomenon among girls.

Table 3. Percentage of children dropping out at various classes/grades in school

Class/Grade	% (n=703)
Never been to school	24.9
1st grade	17.5
2nd grade	5.2
3rd grade	6.2
4th grade	11.0
5th grade	22.1
6th grade	10.1
7th grade	27.2

Table 4. Reasons for child 'never having been to school' or school drop-outs

Reasons	Male (%)	Female (%)
Do not think education is important	8.6	10.0
Child not interested in studies	31.0	22.5
Repeated failure in same class	7.1	5.0
Financial constraint	17.5	13.0
Prolonged illness	3.4	6.0
Sharing household responsibilities	14.9	17.0
Traditional belief	1.9	19.0
Need to supplement family income	7.1	0
Influence of peer group	3.7	0.0
Others	4.9	3.5

Further probing into the traditional values which constrained girls from continuing at school indicated that some parents held the view that 'girls should be able to read the Koran. For this girls are sent to Maderasa to learn Arabic'. Similarly, 'if girls are educated, they will not be obedient and docile and after marriage they will find it difficult to adjust'.

A micro-study of 50 female drop-outs, to ascertain more about the problem of drop-outs, indicated an association between parental education and drop-out behaviour in the family. Moreover, there were several constraints within the households. Most of the households were large in size in terms of family members; large families and overcrowded homes were the norm in the slums. Most of the households did not even have a table or chair for the child to sit and study. Interestingly, many families did possess a television or a radio. This indicates their priority in household spending. Cable TV, and the high volume at which the radios and tape recorders are played, make it difficult for anyone to concentrate on learning activities. In addition, children do not receive adequate supervision or help when they have difficulties, and the home environment is not conducive to pursuing studies.

Parents are also dissatisfied, for various reasons, with the quality of education provided in the municipal schools. Firstly, there are too many children per teacher and hence the teacher/pupil ratio is a handicap. Secondly, the classrooms are overcrowded and cramped, with poor lighting and ventilation. Thirdly, some of the schools do not have toilets or drinking water. Fourthly, many single-parent families cannot afford to pay fees or purchase textbooks necessary for the child to attend school. Fifthly, parents feel that the quality of the education in municipal schools is poor and that teachers are less favourably inclined towards children from deprived groups.

Parents feel that even after completing four years of education, the children are still not able to write sentences correctly. Therefore there is little motivation to send their children to school.

The teachers had another set of reasons for the poor quality of education in municipal schools. The teachers revealed that the parents, after admitting their children to school, are often not bothered as to the outcome and the entire responsibility is thrust on to the teachers. Parents do not like the teachers' reprimands if children often quarrel with the teachers. When the teachers insist that the children should be sent to school, some parents ask for financial help. In other words, teachers consider parental indifference as a major constraining factor towards improving municipal schools.

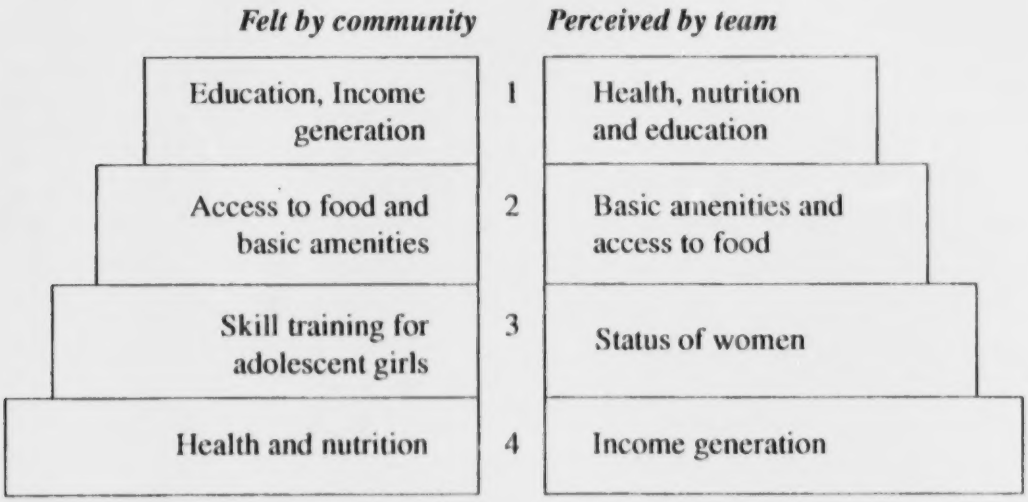
Adult literacy

At least 50 per cent of mothers with children under the age of six were illiterate; nearly 25 per cent had studied up to 7th or 8th standard and only 5.7 per cent had matriculation-level (SSC) education. Similarly, about half of the heads of the households were illiterate and 26 per cent of them had studied up to secondary level, although they had not completed their schooling.

Based on the situation analysis, the project team identified two core areas of concern, namely Health and Nutrition and Education. Health and Nutrition were influenced by a set of factors such as lack of basic amenities, including toilets, drinking water, drains, waste disposal, etc. The community response was also not encouraging. The low level of community participation and lack of collective action further contributed to the poor state of affairs. In fact there was no structure or arrangement for community participation. The next stage in the project implementation was to identify the needs. The needs identified by the team in its initial study were not the same needs

felt by the community. These variations are indicated in *Figure 1*. The community perceived education and income generation as the most important area, whereas income generation was the least important area identified by the team. Similarly, the community identified skill training as an area of intervention, but this was not a top priority according to the team. Surprisingly, health and nutrition were the least important areas identified by the community. Since education was a priority area of both the representatives of the slum and the project team, it was taken up first for intervention. (Strategies and interventions were also planned and initiated for other issues of concern but, for this document, the report is restricted to intervention strategies in education.)

Figure 1. Comparative prioritization of needs by Team V's community



III. THE PROPOSED SOLUTION

It may be interesting to mention the UBSP programme, since the objectives were similar and the same department was extending support for conceiving and implementing it. The IDRC-UNICEF project aimed at improving health and nutrition status by improving access to, and utilization of, services through active community participation and ensuring sustainability. The government's programme, entitled 'Urban Basic Sciences for the Poor (UBSP)', introduced in the slum in 1993, shared essentially the same philosophy, but was more broad-based to focus also on social and economic development through women's empowerment. The UBSP is a strategy to create community-based services. It is a dynamic process which purports to create a facilitating environment for improving the quality of life, achieving social-sector goals and co-ordinating the national Plan of Action for children. It is linked to national efforts like the Convention on Rights of the Child, Alma Ata, Universal Primary Education/Education for All etc. and is integrated with other poverty-alleviation programmes in the country, namely, Low-Cost Sanitation, Nehru Rozgar Yojana (supports training and helps the poor to obtain bank loans for income generation), Environment Improvement of Urban Slums, etc.

More specifically, the objectives of the project are: (i) community organization and mobilization; (ii) empowerment of urban poor communities, especially women; (iii) equipping the community for decision-making and community management; (iv) ensuring convergence in order to enhance outreach and effectiveness of sectoral programmes and to bridge the gap in services and finances; (v) cost-effectiveness - envisages convergence from other

programmes – in effect serves to channel services to the urban poor communities; and (vi) helping to set in place greater sustainable systems which will continue to function effectively on a long-term basis, promoting equity in available resources within a city.

Given its experience of working with Gilbert Hall for three years, the university was invited by Mumbai Municipal Corporation, in 1993, to take responsibility for the social inputs to the UBSP. The strategy involved mobilizing women to help them organize themselves. The principles of operation of the UBSP are generally described by the seven 'C's, namely:

- Child and mother focus,
- Community involvement and empowerment,
- Convergence and co-ordination,
- Continuity,
- Coverage,
- Cost-effectiveness,
- Capacity building.

The institution's first task was therefore to introduce the UBSP into the slum, mobilize the community and form the community structure; and the community organizers (project staff) were to work towards building up the abilities of these women to address social issues. Inputs were to be given through weekly meetings and through a partnership approach.

The approach in UBSP was to focus on quality of life and ask the RCVs to identify problems, needs and constraints faced by their respective neighbourhoods and enable them to carry out needs identification and assessment, planning solutions, mobilization of resources, implementation, monitoring and supervision.

The ultimate goal was to create an organized structure in the long-term groups or individuals, with the community capable of addressing its own problems, with minimal support from external agencies, including SNDT; and also reduce the opportunities for these people to be exploited by middlemen, slum lords and political leaders. This necessitated impressing upon the women the need to be trained to use different means and approaches for convergence, familiarization with how to deal with the Urban Local Body and, underpinning all of these, the limitations illiteracy would impose in realizing their potential as a registered society.

The educational intervention strategies of the project were through adult literacy, pre-school education, school education, non-formal education and vocational/skill training. Education for women was given priority, since it was viewed as a means of empowering the women to enable them to enter the mainstream of society and eventually to enable them to participate in the process of collective action for improving the quality of life. The project attempted to improve opportunities for access to education through:

(a) imparting functional literacy among adolescent girls and females;
(b) sensitizing and motivating the community to encourage women and female children to be educated;
(c) improving the quality of services of pre-school and school education so that drop-outs are reduced;
(d) educational opportunities for child labourers and school drop-outs;
(e) providing opportunities for skill training.

At the departmental level, the overall objective was to serve as facilitators, trainers and help to develop sustainable linkages with the slum-dwellers. The involvement of the university was exactly in line with the earlier project, where student volunteers and teachers

from the Department of Adult and Continuing Education provided inputs and small financial support such as the post-literacy efforts (Jana Shikshan Nilayams), and undertook in-depth micro-studies in selected areas of concern such as school drop-out and its causative factors, child labour, etc. The university was also expected to perform the advocacy role so that other departments, organizations and institutions, including the government and Urban Local Body, would recognize the problems of urban slum-dwellers and take necessary action wherever possible (please read this part carefully).

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

Planning for implementation

Both the IDRC-UNICEF project and the UBSP put great emphasis on community participation as a crucial element in the management of the programme. Therefore the services and strategies to be adopted were determined by community choice and demands vis-à-vis the prioritized needs and facilities existing within the slum, based on the situation analysis and facilities existing within the slum. Although the plans were not made with cost-effectiveness as a component to be measured, all interventions were planned taking into consideration the nature of the intervention and its cost implication, while choosing the least costly options. Community participation was essential, not only for designing the programme, but also for mobilization of resources and to develop a sense of ownership of the programme. This would help in sustaining the activities after the project period was over. In all activities, keeping costs to a minimum, and non-duplication of existing services, were important points borne in mind.

For the IDRC-UNICEF project, the budget allocation for education had been made prior to entry into the slum and was not based on coverage figures relating to the actual situation in the slum. However, the institution, when submitting the budget proposal to the Municipal Corporation, requested funds for education based on the coverage and needs of the slum.

The project was supported financially by IDRC and UNICEF. For project implementation, salaries for one Project Officer and three Community Organizers were provided. In addition, funds were provided for paying an honorarium to 12 community workers. In the

UBSP, there have been four-five project staff, on average, catering to the population of approximately 100,000.

At the departmental level, the Principal Investigator, who was then also the Director of the Department of Postgraduate Studies and Research, involved a faculty member as the Project Co-ordinator. In addition, technical assistance through faculty and students from concerned departments was also sought. The Department of Human Development gave assistance for training of pre-school educators, components and curriculum for the pre-school education, supervision and monitoring, and starting libraries for children. The Department of Extension Education was involved in facilitating the literacy efforts, as well as developing learning materials for functional literacy. The Departments of Textiles and Clothing and Family Resource Management were involved in providing training for selected skills leading to income generation.

The funds in both IDRC-UNICEF and UBSP were administered by the institution. For UBSP, a monthly statement of expenses is sent to nodal officers in the Corporation and the state government's Department of Urban Development, along with a progress report. The role of various actors since 1990-1991 is depicted in *Figure 2*.

(a) The role of the university was:

- to build up capacity of the members of the community structure to address and solve their own problems;
- to ensure sustainability by forging linkages between community structure and service providers;
- advocacy to administrators for providing essential services.

(b) The role of the MMC was:

- to sanction Rs.8,400,000 for the construction of a night school within the slum by MMC;

- to introduce non-formal education (NFE) classes for school drop-outs;
- to supervise the construction of a middle-level and high school in the area for children (approximate value Rs.80 lakhs);
- to ensure the employment of adolescent girls in the NFE and head-start programmes as teachers;
- to organize skill training for youth.

(c) The District Adult Education Centre was responsible for:

- training of literacy teachers;
- instructional and learning materials for literacy;
- state government funding for running post-literacy classes.

(d) Voluntary organizations were relied on for:

- ensuring sustainability of two ECE centres and the construction of a community centre, with sponsorship from the Rotary Club and Hunger Project;
- financial support for starting children's libraries;
- sponsorship of a Family Service Centre for approximately 70 families, to provide children's education and help to prevent drop-out.

(e) The ICDS was responsible for opening new Anganwadis.

(f) The state government was responsible for the scheme (Nehru Rojgar Yojana) for skill training and income generation, e.g.:

- with the community, to permit RCVs to participate and to send women, girls and children for various classes, and for donation of space.

During the first four years of working with the slum, the role of advocacy and facilitating linkages was handled primarily by SNDT, but in the last two years, to ensure sustainability and to transfer

ownership, NHCs have been encouraged to take steps to build linkages for mobilizing resources. To facilitate this, a handbook of information on services and schemes available within the city, the location of organizations, whom to approach, contact telephone numbers etc. are provided to each RCV. At the NHC level also, community members have been encouraged to form committees for education, health etc., on behalf of the NHC. Two or three RCVs assume primary responsibility for specific programmes.

The female local leaders and elected representatives are involved for sensitization. The latter have been approached for help in terms of providing notebooks etc., construction of community centres, and to represent the multifarious needs of this slum community to the Municipal Corporation for provision of services.

SNDT interacts directly with the RCVs, and initially with the administrators, other service providers, political leaders, and elected representatives. Gradually the RCVs are encouraged and helped to write applications, approach officials on their own and independently seek convergence for needed services.

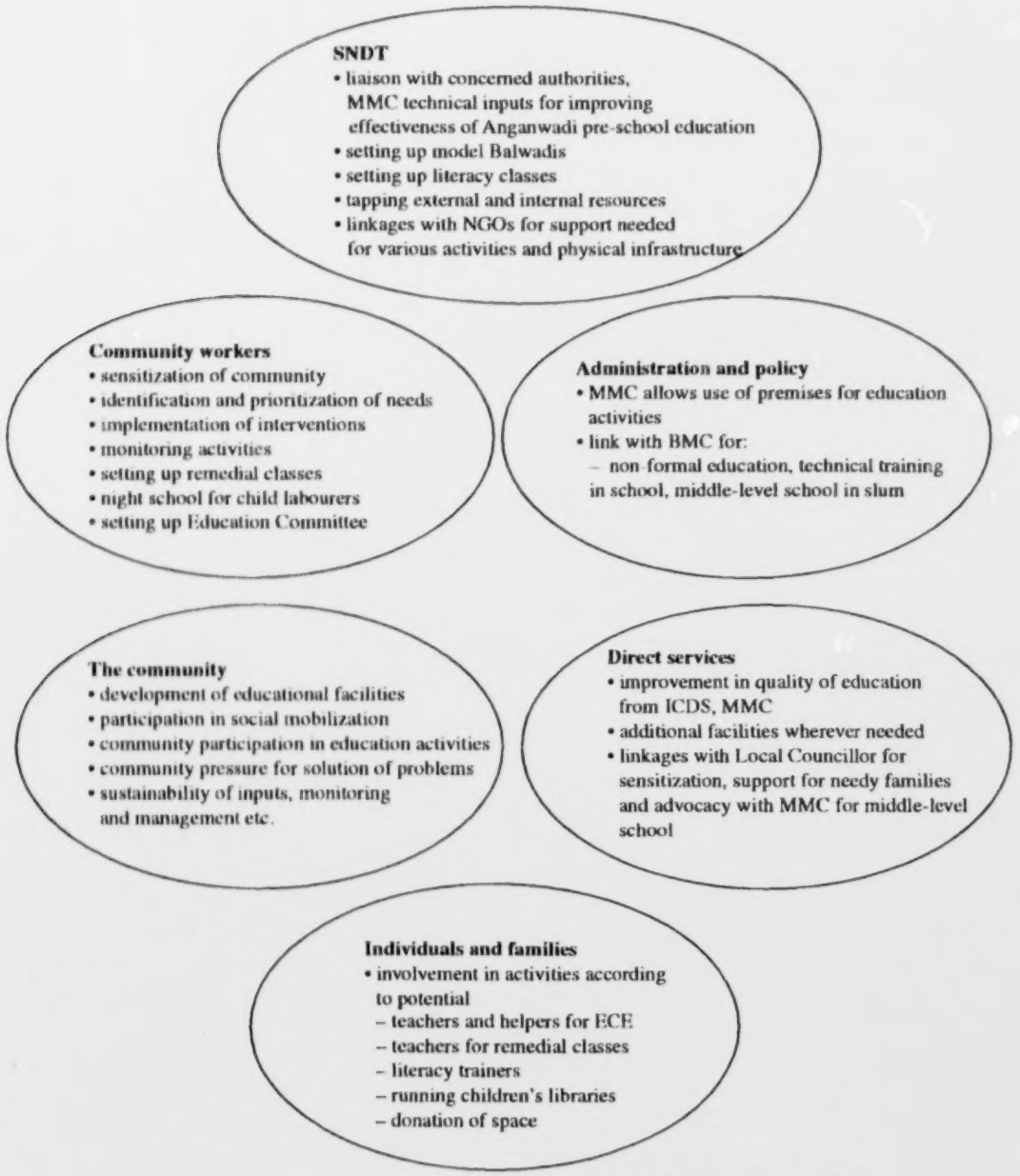
Interactions directly with the community are more intense when the scheme is being initiated, but later are provided as and when RCVs express the need for the project staff to help them in their efforts of sensitization and persuasion.

Implementation of the programme

The IDRC-sponsored project on Urban Nutrition, as well as the UBSP, aimed at self-sustaining development through the community structure organized with SNDT's inputs. In the IDRC project, eight women community workers, who covered the whole slum, received a small honorarium (Rs.300 per month). In the UBSP, the entire effort

is voluntary and no honorarium is paid. The IDRC-UNICEF project essentially helped in laying the foundations and, through it, UBSP's implementation efforts and outreach were intensified.

Figure 2. Convergence for educational inputs


SNDT
• liaison with concerned authorities, MMC technical inputs for improving effectiveness of Anganwadi pre-school education
• setting up model Balwadis
• setting up literacy classes
• tapping external and internal resources
• linkages with NGOs for support needed for various activities and physical infrastructure
Community workers
• sensitization of community
• identification and prioritization of needs
• implementation of interventions
• monitoring activities
• setting up remedial classes
• night school for child labourers
• setting up Education Committee
Administration and policy
• MMC allows use of premises for education activities
• link with BMC for:
– non-formal education, technical training in school, middle-level school in slum
The community
• development of educational facilities
• participation in social mobilization
• community participation in education activities
• community pressure for solution of problems
• sustainability of inputs, monitoring and management etc.
Direct services
• improvement in quality of education from ICDS, MMC
• additional facilities wherever needed
• linkages with Local Councillor for sensitization, support for needy families and advocacy with MMC for middle-level school
Individuals and families
• involvement in activities according to potential
– teachers and helpers for ECE
– teachers for remedial classes
– literacy trainers
– running children's libraries
– donation of space

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Developing community-based structures

All inputs are delevered through an organized community structure which was created as follows.

1 Resident Community Volunteer (RCV) elected to represent 20-25 families

↓

10 RCVs form one Neighbourhood Committee (NHC) (representing approximately 200 families)

↓

Representatives of each of the 10 NHCs form a Community Development Society (CDS) → Facilitated by 1 Community Organizer

At the departmental level, there is a Community Organizer (CO) appointed from the project. Each Community Organizer is required to cover 2,000 families.

The broad plan was to build the capacity of the women for group action through sensitization: (i) about the need for assuming responsibility for solutions and ownership of activities to solve problems; (ii) the need for interacting closely and merging with the mainstream; (iii) about 'education' and its role in shaping the future of their children; and (iv) encouraging self-analysis and appraisal of the current situation by NHC members.

As part of the implementation strategy, training programmes were organized to develop competency among the RCVs on:

- identifying constraints to achieving a good quality of life;
- determining the areas/issues where inputs and improvement are required for various ages and groups;

- planning programmes and gradually taking the responsibility from SNDT;
- undertaking supervision and monitoring as well as record keeping, including maintaining minutes of meetings;
- progressing from small individual activity-wise plans, to holistic yearly plans addressing all needs related to improving the quality of life.

The task of creating the *community structure* and the capacity building of the NHC is the primary task of the Community Organizer. All inputs and interventions are needs-based, planned and implemented jointly with the NHCs. Generally, the first action after formation of the NHC is orientation about project objectives, role of individual RCVs, the NHC and the project team, i.e. the institution, and the National Plan of Action goals.

Subsequently, a general discussion on the importance of education is conducted by the Community Organizer. The NHC is then asked to identify areas of concern and needs and, in the event no request for any educational inputs is made, the Community Organizer asks the members whether their 200 families have 100 per cent literacy, 100 per cent pre-school enrolment/school enrolment. If not, the importance of education is again explained to the NHC and the members are asked to decide which of the above they would like to begin with, on a priority basis.

At the slum level, weekly meetings of each NHC are held with the Community Organizers. In order to gradually transfer ownership and capacity building to the NHCs, the procedure is as follows.

In the beginning, after an NHC is newly formed, the CO takes the initiative to call for meetings and initiates the discussions. He/she encourages all NHC members to participate in the discussions and

the decision-making process. A transition takes place in his/her role from leader to observer and guide at these meetings. In NHCs which have progressed considerably, members are encouraged to hold meetings, even without the CO to discuss issues, needs, decisions taken, etc.

Many of the RCVs themselves were originally illiterate. They had to be made literate for effective functioning of the structure, maintenance of records, documents, etc. As it was necessary for the NHC members to become literate, a general pattern was followed with a progressive build-up towards more complicated tasks.

The pattern is as follows:

- monthly maintenance of attendance registers;
- certification by NHCs regarding performance of pre-school education teachers, literacy, skill training for payment of honoraria;
- request letters to the Municipal Corporation/other agencies to avail of services;
- maintenance of records (for production, distribution) of income-generating activities;
- screening loan applications and recommending eligible cases;
- writing minutes of their weekly meetings;
- involvement in the preparation of official documents such as undertakings/agreements with the Urban Local Body for community maintenance of toilets etc.

Since the Community Organizer (CO) is the nodal facilitator and link between the institution and the NHC, it is her responsibility to implement this pattern according to the readiness of individual NHCs.

In order that the COs should be able to work effectively, they are provided inputs formally through training and through weekly review

meetings with the Co-ordinator. At each meeting, the status in the slum, attitudes and responses of NHCs and community, problems and obstacles, financial aspects etc. are reviewed. Possibilities for convergence to obtain essential resources and strategies at the slum level are planned for future action.

The need for literacy classes or other activities is generally represented through the CO. Pre-school education classes are generally started at the beginning of the academic year, whereas literacy, post-literacy, non-formal education, and skill training classes can be started at any time of the year.

The departmental inputs consist of: training of teachers; providing instructional materials and aids and finances; convergence wherever necessary to facilitate linkages between various components; monitoring and supervision in the initial stages; and training the NHCs to undertake monitoring and supervision of the classes, collection of fees, maintenance of records for attendance, and holding parent-teacher meetings.

Keeping the goal of self-sustainability in mind, the project team took two decisions in 1991, after due deliberation:

(a) Except for literacy, children/learners enrolled in all education and skill-training classes will be charged a nominal fee. These fees are collected and deposited in a community development fund, which will be used for the community itself.

(b) Responsibilities for running these activities and all other activities, including needs assessment, identification of needy persons, planning, implementation, monitoring, and maintenance of records, are gradually transferred to the NHCs as the women members' capacity to independently manage is enhanced.

Adult literacy

Adult literacy and early childhood education were major areas of concern, reinforced by demands from women in two small pockets. However, such demands were not officially voiced. Hence, sensitization of the community became important and was carried out in several ways, as shown in *Figure 3*.

Figure 3. Community mobilization

	Sensitization		
	Individual/Family level	Group level	Community level
Method	Home visits	Mohalla meetings	Cable TV shows March for Education Exhibition
Initiators	Community workers Literacy instructors	Community workers Project Team	Community workers Project Team Literacy instructors Literacy trainees

Community mobilization was done essentially through two methods: personal contacts and group-level meeting. The community women and the project team worked very closely to sensitize the community. In addition, the project representatives received support from local cable TV operators. It was noticed, during the initial stages, that women were unwilling to come for the cable TV shows in the afternoon since they watched commercial films on the cable TV network. Hence, the project team and the community workers approached the local cable TV operator and, after discussion, he volunteered to show the educational films free of cost. In addition, he suggested that during the commercial film itself, he would stop and insert the educational film cassettes. Men would be available only at night and hence the cable TV operator agreed to run the

educational film for the men at night. This suggestion was implemented and the strategy for sensitizing worked well and people began expressing a desire for literacy classes. At the present time this method is no longer feasible, since the cable TV operations are no longer local, with the entry of several networks and large-scale operators, who are not particularly interested in such service-oriented activities which do not bring them revenue. Towards mid-1993, the project team trained a group of adolescent girls to perform street plays on the importance of education and the status of the female child.

The task of identifying the literacy instructors was given to the community workers along with certain criteria. It was difficult to find instructors above 18 years of age. However, many adolescent girls 15 years of age or older were enthusiastic to participate and hence the age limit was lowered. All the instructors were females between 15 and 20 years of age and most of them were unmarried. All of them had family incomes below Rs.1,500 per month. Their motivation to participate in the programme varied. The majority of them (58 per cent) no doubt felt that it was a means of earning an income, and another 26 per cent felt that they could supplement the family income. Only 16 per cent felt that they were doing a social service. Given the overwhelming motivation of the instructors to earn some income, the project team took a conscious decision to pay a small honorarium of Rs.100 per month to the instructors. This was, and still is, completely in contrast to the government literacy programme, wherein the instructor is supposed to work free. Further, it was observed that the instructors required considerable training inputs to be effective teachers and to be able to sustain the interest of the learners, as well as to motivate the community. The literacy classes are conducted according to the convenience of the trainers and learners, usually in the house of the instructor or an RCV.

Until the end of 1992, literacy was mostly viewed as a need for younger women in the community. During this period, the project team was organizing income-generating activities for older women. Discussions held with these women, especially those who had small businesses (vegetable vending, etc.), led to the realization of the importance of literacy and, gradually, the older women began to express their desire for literacy classes. The first literacy class for older and destitute women was established in one pocket in February 1993. The interest of the older women was also spurred by four of the illiterate community workers learning to sign their names.

In 1993, the process of organization and registration of three women's groups increased awareness among the older women on the need for literacy. This came about when women were asked to complete the application forms; many who were illiterate felt they were at a disadvantage. Moreover, those engaged in income-generating activities as a group, felt this was needed for record keeping etc.

Literacy classes were started in 1991 with four classes in one pocket. The demand for literacy has increased and in 1998 there were 20 literacy classes. Similarly, there are four post-literacy classes, which have an added component of skill training. Also, learners are provided with newspapers and magazines to sustain the interest and skills of the neo-literates. So far few men have expressed an interest. Thus, almost all of the literacy classes are attended by women and adolescent girls. The project team encourages illiterate RCVs to become literate through counselling and motivation, especially because of the need for literacy in record keeping and liaison with the civic authority to procure services through written representations.

Pre-school education

The importance of pre-school-level education was not recognized in the community and, hence, many women were not ready to send their children for pre-school education. They associated pre-school education more with supplementary food, available in the ICDS, rather than the educational inputs. The inadequate provision of facilities for pre-school education meant sending children to another Mohalla for such education. The ICDS Anganwadis were covering only about one-third of the pre-school-age child population. It was therefore necessary to increase access to pre-school education. However, consultations were held with the ICDS functionaries regarding their plans for coverage before making a decision about starting new ECE centres called 'Balwadis'. The procedure followed is explained in *Figure 4*. As an initial step, the need for a pre-school facility was assessed, then the possibilities were discussed with ICDS functionaries and then the community requested the project team to open a Balwadi.

In two areas, some slum-dwellers said that they had requested the ICDS to open additional Anganwadis as early as 1989. However, they had not received any response from the ICDS. Consequently, the community workers and some local leaders from these two areas requested SNDT that two Balwadis be set up, one in each area. However, it was perceived by the project team that there were other issues in the area of pre-school education besides inadequate facilities, namely poor quality of existing services. Also, parents' perceptions about the role of early childhood education were erroneous. Most parents thought that pre-school was a downward extension of a primary school. In view of this, it was evident that there was a need to create awareness in the community about the basic philosophy and methodology of early childhood education.

Figure 4. The process of the opening of ICDS

Need	Strategy	Outcome
Increase in pre-school centres	Liaison with ICDS for increasing Anganwadis	Nil
	Set up new Balwadis run by community	Community requests project team

Creating awareness was done first through discussions with the community workers, and then at Mohalla-level meetings. The community workers, Anganwadi workers and literacy workers were taken for exposure visits to the Nursery School run by SNDT University's Department of Human Development, and were taken for puppet shows organized and performed for children by the postgraduate students of the Department of Human Development. Subsequent to this, the community workers from one pocket decided that a Balwadi should be started in their area. In order to do this, several steps were outlined jointly.

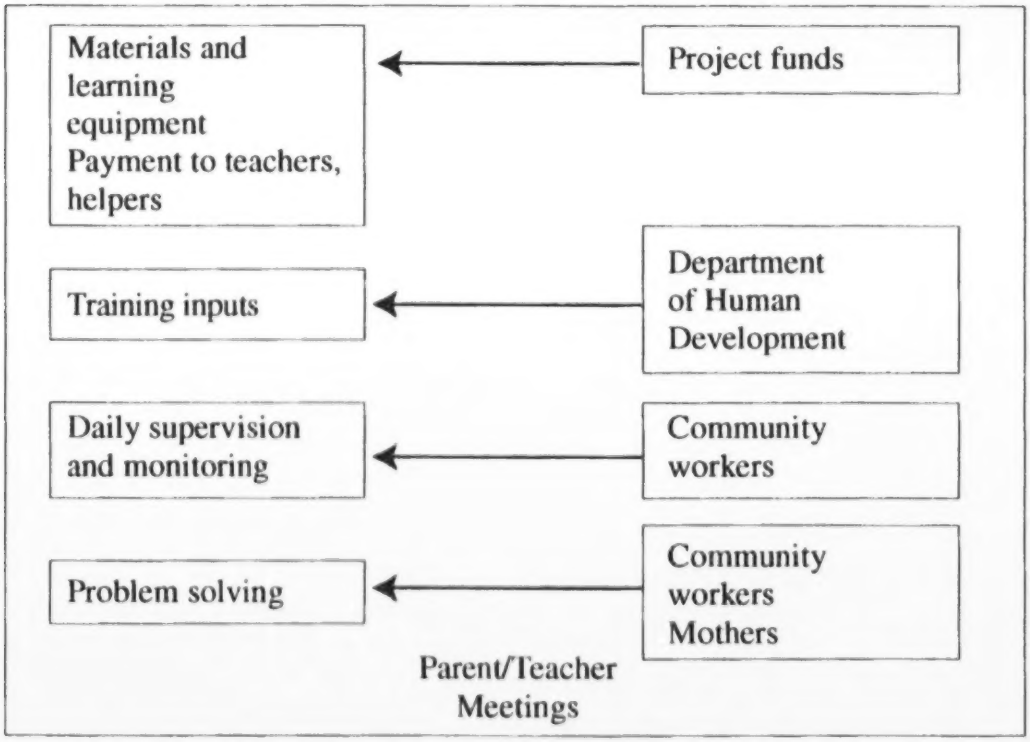
In community meetings with mothers, the following had to be emphasized:

- the academic component of ECE, how it would be delivered and what the children would gain;
- financial implications and sustainability;
- requirement of space.

Another problem facing the project team was how to create a model ECE facility without a trained teacher and how to monitor the

activity. For the various inputs, the sources or persons/groups who took responsibility were as follows (see *Figure 5*):

Figure 5. Distribution of responsibilities



Facilitated by project team

In 1992, one pre-school education centre (Balwadi) was opened in one of the pockets due to the initiative taken by three of the community workers in the IDRC project. Subsequently, there has been a steady demand for pre-school education and the slum currently has 10 pre-school education centres with an average enrolment of 20 to 25 children per class. It was decided that on-the-job training inputs would be primarily the responsibility of the university staff, whereas supervision and monitoring to ensure the smooth running of the Balwadi would be done by the community workers.

A mothers' group was formed and weekly meetings were held, wherein several issues which mothers thought important were reviewed, including the progress made by each child, performance of the teacher etc. The meetings are attended by mothers, the community workers, the teacher and the community organizer assigned to the area. However, community workers have to motivate mothers even now to attend the PT meetings.

In 1993, the Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP) came in and the community structure began to be established. Along with this came demands for new ECE centres to be started, since the people felt that the ECE given by the SNDT University was of good quality. Parents were keen to transfer their children from the ICDS Anganwadis and start new Balwadis in their respective areas. However, given the constraints of space, training of teachers and, more importantly, lack of willingness of a substantial proportion of parents to pay fees, the project team has been careful about opening new centres indiscriminately.

In some pockets, the project team has succeeded in convincing mothers to pay fees. It was explained to the mothers that the fee to be charged is only Rs.10 per month, which works out to only 30 paise per day. Some mothers said to others in the meeting, "if we can give a child 25 paise daily to purchase sweets etc., can we not spend 30 paise per day for education?". The community workers also told the mothers that, since the Balwadi was situated very close to their homes, they would be able to participate, observe and supervise the Balwadi.

In order to avoid duplication of services, a Balwadi is not generally opened where an ICDS centre already exists, unless the coverage is not 100 per cent. Mothers are also discouraged from transferring their children. The major problem is financial sustainability. For this, the team has obtained sponsorship from two NGOs for full support,

including honorarium, all materials and food for 4 out of the 10-12 ECE facilities. Until 1997, a local biscuit manufacturing company gave biscuits free of cost, which has now stopped. Parents in the community are keen that food be supplied to the Balwadi children and the project team is currently making attempts to obtain sponsorship.

Access to primary education and preventing school drop-outs

When the project started in 1991, many parents were not conscious of the need to enrol children in school at the appropriate age (see *Table* 5). Often when the child was enrolled, he/she was ill-prepared for formal school education. Other constraints the community faced was a lack of birth certificates and also financial problems, especially in cases of destitute women.

Table 5. How SNDT tackled the issues

Issues	Action taken
Lack of age-appropriate enrolment	Involved community workers to motivate parents
Lack of birth certificate	Facilitated linkages of the CWs with the Municipal Corporation and showed the procedure for procuring the same
Lack of preparedness for formal school education	Link-up with Corporation's 'Head Start/ Vasantik Marg' programme and through CWs convincing mothers to send children to it
Financial constraints	Linkage with an NGO for financial support or involving women in IGA

For children who found it difficult to cope with studies and dropped out, the CWs started remedial classes with training inputs provided by SNDT for the tutors. In one of the pockets, the

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Corporation runs free remedial classes and hence the CWs refer the children there. Seven children's libraries have been started in the past one and a half years, along with reading materials provided for adolescent girls. The aim was to cultivate reading habits among children and to use this as a means of strengthening inputs given in school as well as in language development. For school drop-outs and child labourers the Municipal Corporation started non-formal education classes from their own funds. Similarly, linkages were made for preparing children for formal education and enrolment in primary school.

Subsequently, for implementation of the scheme 'Urban Basic Services for the Poor', the department was granted Rs.12.88 lakhs for the period 1993-1997 inclusive of staff salaries and all interventions to improve the quality of life. In the past six years, from both projects combined, the expenditure on education inputs has been approximately Rs.472,000.

For education interventions, the amount directly available from IDRC project funds was Rs.90,000 over the three-year period of the project. However, through the department's efforts at convergence in terms of financial, material, technical and other resources, the fiscal value of convergence was approximately Rs.1,400,000 to 1,500,000 for various educational inputs, in addition to Rs.8,400,000 sanctioned by the Municipal Corporation for providing a middle-level school within the slum.

The funds for implementing both projects are administered by the department. As in other projects, yearly statements of expenditure incurred are submitted to IDRC. In the case of the UBSP, monthly expenditure statements, along with a progress report, are submitted to the nodal officers in the Municipal Corporation as well as the state government.

V. PROBLEMS IN IMPLEMENTATION

Several obstacles were encountered from the time of entry into the slum and are encountered even today after six years. The first obstacle at initiation was that women did not come out of their households. Their self-esteem and confidence were low and they required continued support and inputs from the staff to make them realize that they could take the responsibility for the work involved.

The initial resistance encountered, and the steps taken to overcome these, are summarized in *Table 6.*

Table 6. Community resistance at point of entry

Resistance	Overcome by
Negative perception of research team • as data collectors, not doers • expectations of dole, wanted quick-fix solution	Rapport building, participation in slum activities, orientation of key persons
Women refused to step out of homes • discouraged by husbands • purdah system • hopeless and helpless attitude	Sensitizing community via Mohalla meetings, house visits, confidence and capacity building
Lack of collective responsibility • felt no need to maintain amenities, typically, 'it's MMC's job' • negative perception of MMC as unco-operative and uninterested • Problems dealt with on family basis • no common vision or co-operation • no community structure, only interest groups polarized politically	Strengthening community structure • bridging information gap, creating awareness • dialogue with MMC, visits by officials • creating awareness about collective problem solving, co-operating for common goal
No identification with project	Bridging information gaps, exposure visits, linkage with MMC (demonstration of bargaining power), visible inputs like income-generating activity, training centre, Balwadis

In the past, before UBSP, almost all schemes and programmes of the state have had a top-down approach, with the poor being the 'beneficiaries'. The slum-dwellers therefore did not understand, and even now many refuse to accept, that they should assume responsibility, take 'ownership' and do things for themselves. Although the philosophy of partnership in project implementation had been explained, it was only towards the end of 1993 that the eight community workers in the IDRC project began to view the project as 'theirs' rather than 'SNDT's, as they had viewed it previously.

The community has developed a dependency syndrome on public provisions. Many of the urban poor families are not very interested in improving quality of life and many of them think that the project staff are paid salaries and hence they must do whatever is needed to solve problems faced by the slum-dwellers.

Many of the slum-dwellers are part of gangs involved in crime, drug peddling etc. The community organizers have to work at, on the one hand, providing moral support to the RCVs and, on the other hand, deal very diplomatically with these people, as well as with the hostility of the local leaders who feel their power and status are threatened.

One of the major obstacles faced is the stranglehold that the local slum leaders and political leaders have on the poor. The empowerment of the RCVs and the NHCs is perceived as a threat by these persons, who coerce people into not participating in programmes and, in general, prevent the programmes from being effectively and successfully implemented.

A few individuals have misappropriated community collections, e.g. for pre-school education fees, or charge a commission for services rendered, such as helping in school admissions. Such incidents lead

to the poor residents having less trust and becoming cynical about how genuine are the people who purport to help them.

At the administrative level, one of the major problems has been high turnover of community organizers. This is attributable mainly to the salaries which are permitted under the UBSP. Many of the staff have received better-paying positions with voluntary organizations. Further, the kind of work in UBSP is labour-intensive and very demanding of the staff. Shortage of staff has been one of the reasons limiting outreach and coverage of the entire slum.

AN ASSESSMENT[1]

The project intervention focused on adult education, pre-school education, improving enrolment in primary classes and helping in income-generating activities. It is too difficult to make an assessment, since the process has only recently begun. Even so, the information available is very encouraging. A survey was conducted at the end of 1993 to find out the improvement in literacy levels. The survey results are shown in *Figure 8*, which indicates that illiteracy has been reduced by around 8 per cent. This is a considerable achievement. It needs to be noted that the number of literacy centres and learners increased over a period of time (see *Table 7*).

Table 7. Literacy centres and enrolment

Year	Number of literacy centres	Number of learners
1990-91	4	75
1991	13	247
1992	10	175
1993	25	2,750
1994	21	2,750
1995	32	2,750
1996	25	2,750
1997	20	2,750

This shows that the programme could contribute both in terms of number of learners and in terms of improvement of literacy rates.

[1] As of 1 December 1997, the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment, Government of India, introduced the 'Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY)' in place of UBSP. This consists of two special schemes: (i) Urban Self-Employment Programme; (ii) Urban Wage Employment. The programme rules on creation of suitable community structures on the UBSP pattern. However, once the SJSRY was introduced, there has been no

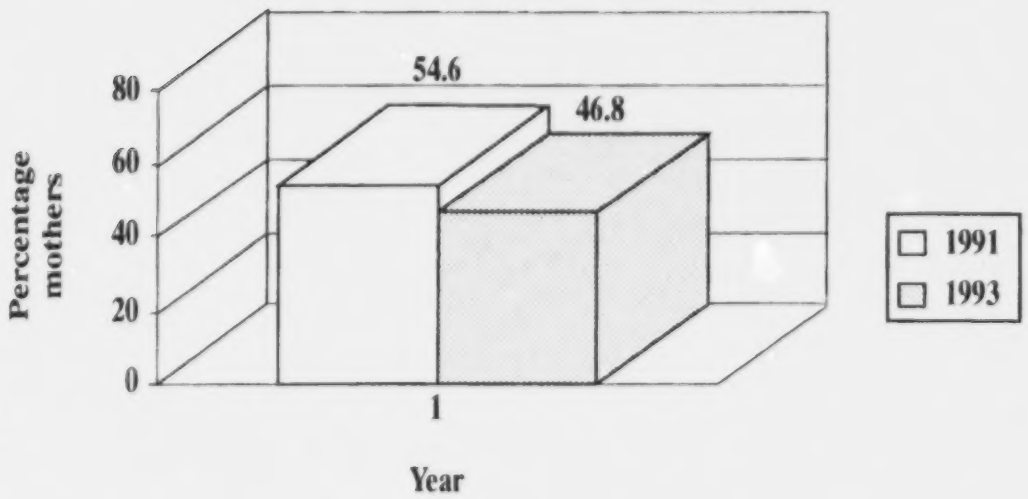
The slum community

Adult literacy and pre-school education

Progress in women's literacy, by year, is shown in *Table 8*.

At the end of 1993, a survey was undertaken to examine whether the rates of illiteracy had changed. A marginal improvement in the literacy rates was observed (*Figure 6*).

Figure 6. Illiteracy among mothers



The number of Balwadis and enrolment by year is shown in *Table 8*.

Table 8. Number of ECE centres and enrolment

Year	Number of ECE centres	Number of children
1990-91	Nil	-
1991	3	35
1992	3	100
1993	13	270
1994	21	425
1995	18	375
1996	13	350
1997	10	250

Now let us consider the changes in pre-school education. There were only three pre-schools in 1991 and by 1994 there were 21. This number gradually declined to 10 by 1997. The number of children enrolled also shows the same pattern. This decline is not a problem since it was essentially due to:

(a) Opening up of four more ICDS pre-school education centres.
(b) Opening of three private nurseries/pre-school centres by local slum leaders.
(c) Parents prefer to enrol children in schools which have ECE and once the child is admitted, they are assured that the child can continue into primary and then secondary school.
(d) Shortage of staff, generally four-five persons catering to a population of 100,000 makes it difficult for effective outreach and implementation. In addition, there are now 32 ICDS Anganwadis with an average enrolment of 35-40 in each Anganwadi. There are also three private nurseries in the area. Therefore, it can be argued that the awareness-generation programme has created enough interest for pre-school education and provision is also made accordingly.

Every year, the enrolment for the Head Start programme conducted in summer has been 200-225. The CWs today, on their own, motivate parents for school enrolment and help them when they have difficulties in obtaining admission to school. Often in private schools they are not entertained by the school authorities. Under these circumstances, a support letter vouching for the community workers is submitted from SNDT. The university's status and the CWs' affiliation with it have enhanced the credibility of the CWs and has helped them in succeeding in their tasks of enrolling children, obtaining fee waivers for needy children etc.

Concerning income generation, approximately 240 women have been directly given opportunities. Several products are produced and marketed by SNDT. Linkages have been made for widows to apply for pensions and loans for income generation under schemes implemented by the government. These achievements are from the point of view of a provider. It is to be recognized that the implementation of the programme was a mutually learning experience and the university has also benefited from this.

Involvement in and implementation of such projects has:

(a) enabled several postgraduate students to conduct micro-studies for their Master's Dissertation;
(b) helped faculty make fieldwork more realistic;
(c) lent continuity to the fieldwork;
(d) provided a base for developing materials not only for literacy, but also for nutrition and health education.

At the undergraduate level, students working towards a BA degree can opt for a course on community development. The project helps them in obtaining field placement. At the departmental level, it has helped in developing and strengthening the expertise and work in

issues related to urban development. On the whole, these projects have convinced the policy-makers and government officials that the institutions of higher education can play an important role in developing the conditions of the poor.

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The book

Urbanization in India is characterized by a high rate of population growth in cities and the inability of civic bodies to provide basic services, including health and education. The Gilbert Hill-Gamdevi Dongri is a slum in Mumbai which accommodates around 1,000,000 people, mostly migrants from other parts of India. They belong to low-income groups and nearly 30 per cent of the families live below the official poverty line. The Department of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Home Sciences, SNDT Women's University, Bombay, implemented a project focusing on adult education, pre-school education, improving enrolment in primary classes and on income-generating activities. The initiative proved to be a success.

Over the years, it was found that the association of the University with the project has helped to change the destiny of the poor in many ways. Community workers, who today work on their own, motivate parents to attend literacy classes, encourage them to send their children to school, and help them when they have difficulties in obtaining school places. The project opened up opportunities for many women to take on income-generating activities and the association with the University has helped widows to apply for pensions and loans to finance such activities under government-assisted schemes.

Attacking urban poverty: the role of the SNDT Women's University, Mumbai, India
The 'Gilbert Hill Programme'

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